

# **Co-operative Federation of Victoria Ltd**

Minutes of board meeting of 16 November 2006, Urban Camp Melbourne Co-operative, Brens Drive, Parkville

Present: Niel Black, Graeme Charles, David Dinning, Tony O'Shea (Chairman) and David Griffiths (Secretary)

Guests: Dianne Batterham and Gordon McLean (Westgate Health Co-op Ltd)

## **1. Minutes**

That the minutes of the meeting of 12 October 2006 be signed by the Chairman as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

## **2. Correspondence**

David Griffiths reported on correspondence regarding housing co-operatives and small co-operatives.

On co-operative housing, Mr. Murray Thompson, the Opposition Spokesperson Housing had responded by telephone.

On small co-operatives, the Hon. Wendy Lovell, the Shadow Minister for Consumer Affairs, had responded in a letter dated 30 October 2006 and Graham McLennan, Manager, Parliament and Correspondence, Cabinet Secretariat, had responded on behalf of the premier in a letter dated 10 November 2006.

## **3. Co-operative Education**

Graeme Charles reported on the status of the co-operative education initiatives.

He reported that he had met with the Chairman of Murray Goulburn and the National Centre for Dairy Education on 13 October 2006.

It was noted that the following initiatives had been undertaken:

- The Co-operative College was preparing a brochure
- Capricorn had agreed to a second workshop with a preferred date of July 2007
- Graeme Charles had registered his attendance at the Monash Agribusiness Workshop in NSW.
- A proposal for the Barossa Community Store.

It was noted that the proposals had to be provided to:

Dairy Milk Co-operative  
Tatura Milk Industries

Organic Farmers Co-operative  
Warrnambool Co-operative Society

It was also noted that there was a need for follow up reports on the one day workshop for:

Batlow  
Bega  
Genetics Australia  
GHI  
Independe4nt Liquor  
UDV

#### **4. Co-operation between Co-operatives**

David Griffiths reported on two meetings with the Community Housing Federation of Victoria and the Australian Friendly Societies Association and exchange of email with ICA Housing and the National Credit Union Association.

It was noted that the discussions included the possible application of the Co-operative Identity Program.

#### **5. Gary Lewis**

David Griffiths reported on discussions with Gary Lewis regarding his new book: The Democracy Principle: Farmer Co-operatives in Twentieth Century Australia.

That the distribution arrangement negotiated between the Secretary and Gary Lewis be endorsed.

1. CFV will place an ad on the front page of the australia.coop web site for a period of 12 months.
2. Payment for the ad will be \$250 to be paid within three months from placement of the ad on the web site.
3. Content of ad will be subject to Gary Lewis' approval. It is envisaged that there will be a picture of the book with details to be determined. There will also be a link to an australia.coop order form and a review of the publication.
4. australia.coop order form will be subject to Gary Lewis approval
5. CFV will promote the publication based on a 20% discount on the price excluding postage and handling – 10% to be retained as commission by CFV and a 10% discount for those who use the australia.coop order form
6. Order forms with payment will go direct to Gary Lewis
7. CFV will not retain copies for distribution.
8. The onus will be on Gary Lewis to advise us on a quarterly basis of the number of australia.coop orders and pay CFV the 10% commission on each publication sold using the australia.coop order form.
9. Visitors to the web site will be asked to address any queries to [cfv@australia.coop](mailto:cfv@australia.coop) CFV will advise Gary Lewis of the nature of queries and forward any queries that require your response.

That the distribution arrangement negotiated between the Secretary and Gary Lewis be endorsed.

It was noted that David Griffiths had nominated Gary Lewis for the Australasian Agribusiness Co-operatives Hall of Honor.

That the nomination Gary Lewis for the Australasian Agribusiness Co-operatives Hall of Honor. Be endorsed.

That two copies of The Democracy Principle be purchased with one for the board and the other to be provided to the UK Co-operative College.

## **6.Finance**

There was discussion on the Treasurer's Report to Board Meeting November 16 2006.

This identified the following accounts for payment:

Secretary – honorium \$426  
Secretary – consultancy \$572  
D&O Insurance \$2,314  
G> Charles \$2000  
Co-operative College \$32,832

That accounts for payment be paid with the exception of the Co-operative College.

That the Treasurer prepare a detailed statement on the costs of the Murray Goulburn and Open workshops in Melbourne and circulate this to directors with respect to the \$5000 cash allocation made by Murray Goulburn in the application to the Gardiner Foundation for further consideration.

## **7.Healthy Co-operation**

Westgate Health's Gordon McLean summarised his paper on co-operation and co-operative initiatives.

That Gordon McLean's paper be permanently placed on the agenda until the board is satisfied that it has had adequate opportunity to work through the issues in the paper.

## **8. Global 300**

David Griffiths reported that the ICA's Global 300 project had been launched and that the response had been particularly positive from France and the UK. He said that the ICA was seeking sponsorship for ongoing work.

He said that the ICA had asked that he continue to be involved and that it was envisaged that the Project would restart early next year and that direct income for CFV would be a minimum of \$1000.

**Next Meeting:** 10: 0.0. am, 16 November 2006

Prepared by David Griffiths: 17 November 2006

Approved by Tony O'Shea: November 2006

Emailed to directors: November 2006

Raising funds to raise interest in the co-op communities, this may be available through organisations with a Social Responsibility Budget with an association to Co-ops and may include Credit Unions, and successful Business Co-ops.

Promoting the community type of co-op that has a successful model on which other co-ops can use to develop and improve the type of facility or service that is required in the membership of the co-ops.

Recruiting the people with drive and talent to strengthen and develop or re-develop the structures with co-op principles as the main focus.

Establish strong links with Local Government (Councils) to address community shortfalls in services from Local, State and Federal Governments, e.g. Health, Housing, Medical, Dental, Mental health to name a potential few.

Build Networks within and between co-ops to enable development of new initiatives and inspiration to intact co-ops promoting the power that a co-op community can harness in their own communities.

Conduct an Audit of what services and products co-ops offer.

Source interest from co-ops to participate in a Network Development and Education Seminar at low cost to co-ops on the basis of getting Networks established.

Design a package of How to improve and expand the role of co-ops, drawing on the historical way in which co-ops operated in communities.

Establish business interchange between co-ops promoting services and products which can benefit members of co-op associations.

Promote membership of a co-op not as a share holder, but as an equality owner, this helps to remove the perception of dividend or financial reward as the incentive for being a co-op member.

Develop forward looking programs and vision of the future to promote the co-op concept, some perceptions may look at co-ops as being a dated business model, which is run by non professionals or lack of financial resources.

Align the Federation of Co-ops Victoria with another State body eg NSW to form a National body with the option of all State bodies and/or co-ops participating, this is co-operation. If states do not want to participate recruit co-ops directly and indirectly through the Networks mentioned previously. A national body could ensure that co-ops get picked up by Federal government radar, enabling a greater awareness of the co-op movement.

Reconfigure the Co-op website to promote the diversity of services that co-ops in Victoria and Australia offer, visitation to the web site appears to be mainly from Overseas, hence the potential to service a tourism facility and invitation to International Co-op Members to interchange many of the facilities our co-ops have to offer.

Offer a mentoring service to struggling and newly establishing co-ops to assist them with areas of governance, motivation, training, marketing and executive recruitment.

Ensure strong links between Credit Unions and Co-ops as it is this part of the population that readily may identify with the co-op model, and potentially a good area to recruit and expand.

Conduct a census of how many people are co-op members, how many businesses and community groups are co-ops.

Seek funding as a State or National body from governments using this information or to obtain the information.

Educate all levels of government of the value of co-ops and how they improve the Nation, State and local community in Urban, Regional, and Rural communities.

Educate other Political players Oppositions, Minor parties and Independents of the value of co-ops and the contribution they make.

Get Media attention for all positive co-op programs, Educate the Media on co-ops, this can be done at Local, State and National level.

Establish International links with other co-ops and peak co-op bodies.

Establish a State, National and International Conference of Co-ops and hold it in Australia.

The above compilation of ideas provides for some positive thought and inspiration of where we could take the co-op movement to from its present position. Being a dedicated co-op believer I am of firm belief all of these objectives are achievable, and the people necessary are in the co-op movement already, or waiting on the fringe for something to happen before putting their hands up to support the drive forward.

Graeme I hope this is of value to the Co-op Federation and if I can be of further help in creating the future, please contact me.

Kind Regards Gordon McLean.